

# Working with Two-Spirit and Native LGBTQ Youth

Targeted Resources for Tribal Child Welfare, March 2018

"Two-Spirit" or "Two-Spirited" is a Native American concept that usually indicates that an individual houses both a masculine and a feminine spirit. The Two-Spirit identity should only be used by a person who identifies as Native American. Most Indigenous communities have specific terms in their own languages for the gender-variant members of their communities and the social and spiritual roles these individuals fulfill — including Lakota: *wínkte*, Navajo: *nádleehé*, Mohave: *hwame*." (Lenny Hayes, Sandy White Hawk, 2017)

## Understanding and Reclaiming our Two-Spirit Relatives

Lenny Hayes and Sandy White Hawk developed this presentation for a workshop at the 2017 NICWA conference.

## Sharing Our Lived Experiences: Eight Tips for Understanding the Two-Spirit/LGBTQ Journey for Native Youth in the Child Welfare System

This tip sheet from the NRC4Tribes and Tribal Star offers support for Native children and youth who may be Two-Spirit and/or LGBTQ to help them feel connected to resources and communities.

## Sharing Our Lived Experiences: 22 Tips for Caring for Two-Spirit and Native LGBTQ Youth

This tip sheet offers helpful guidance for those connected with youth in the child welfare system who may be Two-Spirit or Native LGBTQ (tribal child welfare professionals, foster and adoptive parents, caregivers, or community members).

## Walking in Two Worlds: Supporting the Two Spirit and Native LGBTQ Community

What it means to be Two-Spirit, various definitions, tips on how to be a good ally, and potential challenges and barriers that may be experienced by those who identify as Two-Spirit or Native LGBTQ are included within this educational guide. (Please seek printing permission from *The Minnesota Indian Women's Sexual Assault Coalition*.)

## Tribal Equity Toolkit 3.0: Tribal Resolutions and Codes to Support Two Spirit and LGBTQ Justice in Indian Country

This toolkit offers ideas on how to adapt tribal resolutions and codes to be inclusive of Two-Spirit and LGBTQ tribal citizens.

## Standards of Care For Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Questioning, Intersex, and Two-Spirit American Indian/Alaska Native Youth

NICWA developed this 2013 newsletter as part of their Honoring Innovations Report series designed to offer best practice ideas for system of care communities.

## Healing Footsteps: Digital Stories from Two-Spirit/LGBTQ

Lenny, Jason, and Joseph – Two-Spirit people whose lives were impacted by the child welfare system – share their stories.

## Two-Spirits

This film tells the story of Fred Martinez, a Two-Spirit person who was victim of a brutal hate crime and murdered at the age of 16. Weaving stories of tradition, history, and hope from Native American cultures, *Two Spirits* and companion films can be previewed on [PBS](http://www.pbs.org) or purchased in their entirety from <http://www.twospirits.org/>.

## A Place in the Middle

Hawaiian children and their teacher tell a powerful story of ancient traditions that they're keeping alive and the valued place for those that embrace their masculine and feminine traits.



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## Learn More

1. [LGBTQ2S Annotated Bibliography by Peter Brunette](#)
2. [Two-Spirit People: Native American Gender Identity, Sexuality, and Spirituality, Edited by Sue-Ellen Jacobs, Wesley Thomas, and Sabine Lang](#)

Find these resources, and more, at the Tribal Information Exchange:  
[www.tribalinformationexchange.org](http://www.tribalinformationexchange.org).



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